

1547.

**URBAN DISTRICT OF
RHYMNEY.**

11507 1944

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER

OF HEALTH

AND

SANITARY INSPECTOR

FOR

THE YEAR 1943.

Rhymney

Urban District Council.

Chairman (1943) Councillor B. I. Evans, J.P.
Vice-Chairman (1943) Councillor J. J. Williams.
Clerk and Accountant to the Council ... A. E. Morris, Esq., A.I.M.T.A.

MEMBERS.

<i>Upper Ward.</i>	<i>Middle Ward.</i>
Councillor W. T. Hopkin	Councillor O. A. Evans
Councillor John Jones	Councillor Reginald Griffiths
Councillor Benjamin Richards	Councillor W. R. Morgan
Councillor B. I. Evans	

<i>Lower Ward.</i>	<i>Abertysswg Ward.</i>
Councillor Jenkin Howells	Councillor Gwilym Richards
Councillor J. J. Williams	Councillor Philip Price
Councillor D. A. Moseley	Councillor W. J. Greene, J.P.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY.

Medical Officer of Health (Part time) :
R. V. de Acton Redwood, F.R.C.S. (Edin.)

Sanitary Inspector (Whole time) :
G. R. Davies, M.S.I.A., C.R.S.I.,
Certificated Sanitary Inspector, The Royal Sanitary Institute,
Certificated Inspector of Meat and Other Foods, The Royal Sanitary
Institute.

To the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Members of the
Rhymney Urban District Council.

Gentlemen,

I beg to submit the Annual Report on the vital statistics and sanitary conditions of your District for the year 1943. This has been drawn up on the lines indicated by the Welsh Board of Health, but owing to the War it has been curtailed as far as possible.

Coal mining is the chief industry of the district, but there are a number of both males and females working in factories situated outside the Area. Social conditions (described more fully in previous reports) altered very little during the year.

STATISTICS, ETC.

Area of the district in Acres ...	...	...	...	...	2,647.94
Area Upper Ward (excluding Llechryd) ...	...	...	...	...	684.78
Area Llechryd ...	...	...	...	...	625.63
Area Middle Ward ...	...	...	...	...	352.16
Area Lower Ward ...	...	...	...	...	297.64
Area Abertysswg Ward ...	...	...	...	...	687.73
Rateable Value—1st October, 1943	...	...	...	...	£26,600
31st December, 1943	...	...	...	...	£26,548
Penny Rate Product 1942—1943 ...	...	...	...	...	£93 5s. 10d.

HOSTEL. This was not used during the year, but is retained for use as an "Emergency Hostel."

LIVE BIRTHS.

	Total	Males	Females	
Legitimate ...	186	101	85	Birth-rate per 1,000 of the Population ... 21.53
Illegitimate ...	10	1	9	

STILL BIRTHS.

	Total	Males	Females	
Legitimate ...	7	5	2	Rate per 1,000 total live and still births ... 34.4
Illegitimate ...	0	0	0	

The Still Birth Rate per 1,000 of the population is 0.76 ; for England and Wales 0.54 ; and for Monmouthshire 0.70.

DEATHS.

Total	Males	Females	Death Rate per 1,000 of the Population
101	53	48	11.09.

Number of women dying in, or in consequence of childbirth—

	Deaths	Rate per 1,000 total live and still births
Puerperal Sepsis ...	1	4.9
Other Maternal Causes ...	Nil	Nil
Total	1	4.9

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age—

Legitimate Infants per 1,000 legitimate live births ...	86
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births ...	Nil
All Infants per 1,000 live births ...	80.16
There were 16 deaths under one year (All Legitimate)	
Deaths from Measles (all ages) ...	0
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages) ...	1
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age) ...	3
Deaths from Cancer (all ages) ...	10

Particulars of unusual or excessive mortality during the year—None.

STATISTICS FOR ENGLAND AND WALES, ETC., 1943.

	Death Rate (All Causes)	Live Birth Rate per 1,000 Total Population	Total Deaths under 1 year (Rate per 1,000 Live Births)
England & Wales ...	12.1	16.5	49
Monmouthshire ...	11.39	18.6	44.95
Rhymney ...	11.09	21.53	80.16

The death rate at all ages is a little below that for England and Wales and for Monmouthshire (County), but the rate for deaths under 1 year of age is 31.16 higher than the rate for England and Wales and 35.21 higher than the rate for the County. It is 11.64 less than the rate for 1942, but there is still considerable room for improvement. The birth rate is higher than that for England and Wales and Monmouthshire (County).

For 1942 the Death Rate (all ages) was 14.8 ; the Birth Rate 20.04, and the Infantile Rate 91.8.

HOSPITALS (Infectious Disease). Arrangements are made with other Local Authorities to remove cases of infectious diseases to their Isolation Hospitals when I consider it necessary. For evacuees, arrangements have been made by the County Medical Officer of Health but we have had some difficulty in hiring an ambulance together with a nurse.

TUBERCULOSIS. No provision by District Council. All Tuberculosis Cases are known to the Medical Officers of the King Edward VII. Memorial, who hold a Clinic in the centre of the district once a month at the Central Surgery, Rhymney.

All appropriate cases are offered and urged to go to the Hospitals and Sanatoria provided by the Memorial.

MATERNITY. No provision by District Council. All expectant mothers are urged to attend the ante-natal clinic of the Monmouthshire County Council at the Urdd Hall at Rhymney. Cases of probable or possible complications are sent to Cardiff for further consultation, and, if necessary, admitted to the Maternity Home connected with Cardiff Infirmary at Glossop Terrace.

Any unexpected emergency, unfit for removal to Cardiff, is dealt with at the Rhymney Hospital.

Some cases at their own request, or for minor complications, are admitted to the Tredegar Maternity Home.

CHILDREN. No provision by the Council. Surgical cases go to the Cottage Hospitals at Rhymney and Abertysswg.

Orthopædic cases, through the County Council, go to their clinics, at places and times arranged by them.

A Rheumatic Clinic (post Rheumatic hearts) has been provided by the Monmouthshire County Council.

INCURABLES (Inoperative Malignant Disease). The only provision is the Poor Law Hospital at Tredegar. The need for further provision is constantly being felt for these cases.

UNMARRIED MOTHERS. Illegitimate Children and Homeless Children. The Infirmary at Tredegar and the Children's Homes at Tredegar and Rhymney is the only provision for this district.

OTHER. Poor Law cases needing Hospital Treatment are sent to the Infirmary at Tredegar (four miles).

The Rhymney Cottage Hospital and the Abertysswg Cottage Hospital owned by the Workmen of the district, admit surgical cases, i.e., accidents and surgical diseases of the workmen and their dependents.

Medical and Surgical cases are also sent to the Royal Infirmary, Cardiff, and the Gwent Hospital, Newport.

Convalescent cases amongst colliery workmen go to Talygarn Miners' Welfare Home, also Porthcawl Rest.

A few women go to the Convalescent Home at Southerdown. There is very little provision for convalescent women (one small home for a large area).

There is no provision for convalescence for children.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

WATER SUPPLY. The conditions remain the same as at the end of last year, the supply is ample and of good quality. Samples are taken by the Rhymney Valley Water Board. Samples from springs serving isolated farm houses are collected by the Public Health Department, and 14 were submitted for examination during the year.

Source A. Gathering Ground at Blaen Rhymney; this empties into (1) Old Reservoir, 9,000,000 gallons; (2) New Reservoir 46,000,000 gallons, the property of the Rhymney Valley Water Board.

Source B. From the Taff Fechan Reservoir, the property of the Taff Fechan Supply Board. Capacity, 350,000,000 gallons.

Springs (Outlying farm houses and a few cottages only). On the whole these have been fairly successful throughout the year.

DRAINAGE, SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL. With the exception of minor improvements and the clearing of blockages, the sewers have, on the whole, worked satisfactorily.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION. With the exception of outlying houses and isolated farm houses, the whole district is served by the water carriage system. A scheme was prepared during 1939 for the laying of a sewer at Princetown and Rhymney Bridge (60 houses) and for the conversion of the privies and pail closets to water-closets, but owing to the outbreak of War an enquiry arranged by the Ministry had to be abandoned.

COLLECTION OF HOUSE REFUSE, ETC. Since May, 1942, this service has been carried out by direct labour, and under the supervision of the Sanitary Inspector. The method of disposal is the same as in most other parts of the County, viz., tipping on waste land.

FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS, SHOPS AND OFFICES.

Sanitary Conveniences have been provided in all cases where necessary. Attention has also been drawn to Section 10 (1) (b), temperature.

ERADICATION OF BED BUGS. Three houses were found to be infested, and the whole premises treated.

The methods adopted are—

(1) Cimex Patent Block Disinfestators and then spraying with insecticide.

(2) Removal of skirting boards, etc., and using a blow-lamp.

The work of disinfestation is carried out by the Local Authority. Insecticides are also given (free) to tenants.

The under-mentioned insecticides and fumigants are used:
Zaldecide, Pyagra, Cimex.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

101 Intimation letters and 63 Statutory Notices were served.

NUISANCES DETECTED OR REPAIRS REQUIRED.

	Total
(1) Dilapidated, defective and choked W.C. drains	26
(2) Insufficient W.C. or privy accommodation	1
(3) To open and repair slop drains	7
(4) To drain, flush, cleanse or repair urinals	2
(5) To provide or repair cisterns in W.C.s	3
(6) To pave and repair back yards	6
(7) Throwing of house refuse or removal of foul accumulations	6
(8) To cleanse cesspools	0
(9) To cleanse dwelling houses and bedding	2
(10) To provide and repair rain water troughing, etc.	28
(11) To repair drain vent or soil pipes	0
(12) To limewash pig or chickens cots	0
(13) To prevent overcrowding	0
(14) To prevent pollution of streams or rivers	0
(15) To repair defective house roofs causing dampness	43
(16) To provide sinks in houses	0
(17) To provide or repair coal places	2
(18) To cleanse water courses	0
(19) To repair W.C. walls, roofs, doors and floors	14
(20) To provide new W.C. pans	6
(21) To provide new ovens	4
(22) To repair privies or provide new pails	5
(23) To provide or repair pantries	10
(24) To repair fireplaces	14
(25) To repair or take down dangerous chimney stacks and rebuild	2

(26)	To replaster walls	...	...	...	...	...	17
(27)	To rebuild boundary or retaining walls	...	...	...	...	...	0
(28)	To repair house floors	...	...	...	...	...	16
(29)	To repair broken ceilings	...	...	...	...	...	8
(30)	To provide slop drains	...	...	...	...	...	0
(31)	Defective condition of main walls	...	...	...	...	...	7
(32)	Defective condition of house doors or windows	...	...	...	...	...	54
(33)	Other nuisances	...	...	...	...	...	22

INFESTATION ORDER AND RATS & MICE (DESTRUCTION) ACT, 1919. Baits were laid at various places throughout the year. Baits were also issued to various people for use at their respective premises. Towards the end of the year, a start was made on a survey to determine the extent of infestation in the district.

HOUSING.

HOUSING AND OVERCROWDING. It has been pointed out in Annual Reports for many years that a number of new houses are required, as the majority of existing houses are rather old and without the necessary conveniences, etc.

UNFIT HOUSES. A large amount of work has been accomplished in the way of repairing houses, but there are a number of unfit houses in the district that should be closed. Minor repairs are being carried out from time to time, but owing to the shortage of labour and material it is often difficult to have work carried out. It is hoped that after the War it will be possible to proceed with the demolition of unfit houses and the erection of new houses, and also to provide bungalows for aged people.

Number of new houses erected during the year—Nil.

POST-WAR HOUSING NEEDS. Besides dealing with Slum Clearance and Overcrowding, it appears that it will also be necessary to provide houses for young people who have married during the war. A number of these war-time marriages are cases where either the husband or wife, or both, are serving in the Forces or on War work, and who have not yet had an opportunity to set up a home of their own. In many instances they are forced to live with parents or other relatives, or to take one or two rooms with other families.

Owing to industrial depression and financial difficulties, a Housing Scheme has not been carried out in this area since 1920-21, when 60 houses were built.

Prosecutions instituted during the year—One.

(1) Offence : Giving toys, etc., for rags.

Result : Defendant fined 20/- and ordered to pay 20/- towards costs and Court fees.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOODS.

During the year 30 samples of milk were taken for bacteriological examination. These were all found to be free from tubercle bacilli, etc., but in some instances the Pathologist stated that they were not satisfactory "bacteriologically." Where unsatisfactory results were obtained, the persons concerned were requested to appear before the Council.

NATIONAL MILK TESTING AND ADVISORY SCHEME. Since September, 1943, samples have also been collected fortnightly from producer retailers, and results, on the whole, have been satisfactory. 80 samples were submitted for examination. The two slaughter houses were only used occasionally during the year, in order to kill pigs kept by cottagers, etc. Since the War, livestock are killed at Government slaughter houses.

MEAT CONDEMNED DURING THE YEAR. 53 lbs Bacon ; 40 lbs. Ham ; 13 lbs. Sausage ; 3 Pigs' heads and tongues.

NUMBER OF ANIMALS KILLED by Farmers, Cottagers, etc., during the year. Pigs 115.

PUBLIC HEALTH MEAT REGULATIONS, 1924. These Regulations have been carried out in a satisfactory manner on the whole.

SHOPS, STORES. There has been no cause for complaint as to the protection of the meat from contamination and the sanitary condition of the premises. With the exception of two premises, all butcher shops have refrigerators.

FISH FRYING AND CHIP POTATO SHOPS, ETC. Attention was given to all the appliances used in connection with this trade respecting cleanliness, etc.

BAKEHOUSES. Limewashing and general cleanliness receives attention.

OTHER FOOD CONDEMNED. 60 tins Meat ; 5 tins Soup ; 17 tins Fish ; 10 tins Milk ; 11 tins Vegetables ; 3 tins Fruit (106 tins) ; 108 lbs. Butter ; 12 lbs. Margarine ; 42 lbs. Cheese ; 12 dozen Eggs ; 30 lbs. Potatoes.

PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

1943—352 Cases (Scarlet Fever 6 ; Diphtheria 24 ; Measles 284 ; Whooping Cough 7 ; Tuberculosis 20 ; Pneumonia 5 ; Erysipelas 2 ; Pyrexia 4).

1942—49 Cases (Scarlet Fever 10 ; Diphtheria 3 ; Tuberculosis 16 ; Erysipelas 8 ; Pyrexia 4 ; Whooping Cough 2 ; Measles 6).

1941—93 Cases (Scarlet Fever 10 ; Diphtheria 8 ; Tuberculosis 17 ; Erysipelas 7 ; Pyrexia 2 ; Ophthalmia Neonatorum 1 ; Poliomyelitis 1 ; Whooping Cough 14 ; Measles 32).

1940—213 Cases (Scarlet Fever 12 ; Diphtheria 3 ; Tuberculosis 16 ; Erysipelas 5 ; Pyrexia 2 ; Ophthalmia Neonatorum 2 ; Poliomyelitis 1 ; Whooping Cough 10 ; Measles 162).

TOTAL NUMBER OF CASES NOTIFIED IN EACH WARD.

Upper Ward	...	...	...	...	134 cases.
Middle Ward	...	...	...	...	116 cases.
Lower Ward	...	...	...	...	75 cases.
Abertysswg Ward	...	...	...	...	27 cases.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES (OTHER THAN TUBERCULOSIS)

During the Year 1943.

Disease.	Total Cases Notified.	Cases Admitted to Hospital	Total Deaths.
Small Pox	Nil	Nil	Nil
Scarlet Fever	6	Nil	Nil
Diphtheria	24	6	1 (Died Jan., 1944)
Enteric Fever (including Paratyphoid) ...	Nil	Nil	Nil
Puerperal Pyrexia	4	Nil	Nil
Pneumonia	5	Nil	9
Other diseases generally notifiable (specify disease)			
Cerebro Spinal Meningitis	Nil	Nil	Nil
Erysipelas	2	Nil	Nil
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	Nil	Nil	Nil
Poliomyelitis	Nil	Nil	Nil
Whooping Cough	7	Nil	1
Measles	284	Nil	Nil
Other diseases notifiable locally (specify disease)	Nil	Nil	Nil

OPHTHALMIA NEONATORUM.

Cases—Nil			Vision Un- impaired.	Vision Impaired.	Total Blindness	Deaths.
Notified.	Treated.					
	At Home.	In Hos- pital.				
Nil	—	—	—	—	—	—

The Sanitary Inspector visits each house and instructs how to carry out isolation there ; in most cases from the number of occupants and the type of house this is difficult or impossible.

Small Pox—No case. Erysipelas — 2 cases (8 cases in 1942).
No deaths.

TUBERCULOSIS.

Deaths from Tuberculosis of the respiratory system, 4 ; death rate per 1,000 living, .43 deaths from other forms of Tubercular Diseases, 3 ; death rate per 1,000 living, .32 ; death rate from all forms of Tuberculosis, .76. Last year the death rate from Pulmonary Tuberculosis was .64 ; from other Tubercular Diseases, Nil ; and from all forms of Tuberculosis, .64.

New Cases and Mortality during 1943.

The following table shows the age and sex distribution of the notified cases and of the deaths :—

Age Periods.	NEW CASES—20				DEATHS—7			
	Respiratory 14		Non- Respiratory 6		Respiratory 4		Non- Respiratory 3	
	7 M.	7 F.	4 M.	2 F.	1 M.	3 F.	0 M.	3 F.
	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
10	—	1	2	—	—	1	—	1
15	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	1
25	2	3	1	—	1	1	—	1
35	2	3	—	—	—	—	—	—
45	2	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
55	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
and upwards	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals	7	7	4	2	1	3	0	3

There were 4 deaths from Respiratory Tuberculosis and 3 deaths from the non-pulmonary type.

A death from Respiratory Tuberculosis was not notified. This was a young woman who was diagnosed as suffering from the disease upon admittance into a Maternity Hospital, and it was notified to the Medical Officer of the area where the Hospital is situated. She died a few days after returning home.

One case of tubercular meningitis was also not notified, but this was a young woman nursing away from home, and who died at the hospital where engaged.

The ratio of non-notified cases being 2 : 7.

Patients from the district are admitted to the following Institutions :—

- (1) Glan Ely Hospital, near Cardiff.
- (2) North Wales Sanatorium, Denbigh.
- (3) Cefn Mabley Hospital, near Cardiff.
- (4) Mardy Hospital, Merthyr Tydfil.

PUBLIC HEALTH (PREVENTION OF TUBERCULOSIS) REGULATIONS, 1925.

No action was necessary under these Regulations, which are framed with the view of preventing persons suffering from Tuberculosis occupying themselves in the milk trade.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT, 1936, SECTION 172.

Section 172. This Section which enforces the compulsory removal of a patient suffering from tuberculosis and in an infectious state to Hospital, when there is no proper accommodation at the house, was not made use of.

Tuberculosis is still relatively prevalent in the district compared to other notifiable infectious diseases. It is hoped the new provisions will influence the position.

Diphtheria. The need of immunisation was widely advertised. The response was not as good as in other parts of the country. Suitable and convenient arrangements were made at Rhymney Hospital for carrying out this work. Twenty-four cases were notified, and one case notified in December died on 10th January, 1944. A number of carriers were found in the Abertysswg Ward.

Scabies, 1941 Order. This is being carried out and cases were removed to Hospital near Abergavenny.

The Urban Council hope it will be possible to open a local Hostel for cases in their own District.

Enteric Fever. No case.

Pneumonia (Influenza and others). 5 cases notified. The heavy rainfall (and high altitude, 900 feet) during the winter months has some influence on the number of these cases. 9 deaths.

Encephalitis Lethargica. No case notified.

Ophthalmia Neonatorum. No case notified.

Malaria and Dysentery. No cases.

Influenza. 6 deaths.

Disinfection. In every case of infectious disease the house is visited by the Sanitary Inspector immediately after notification and frequently during the illness until disinfection is carried out.

There is no steam disinfectors in the district and no facilities for dealing with verminous persons and their belongings. This matter was discussed with the Tredegar Urban District Council at a meeting held during 1942.

In conclusion, I again wish to express my appreciation for the continued and willing support of the Council and for the services rendered by Mr. Davies, Sanitary Inspector.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully,

R. V. de ACTON REDWOOD, F.R.C.S. (Edin.), etc.

Medical Officer of Health.

July, 1944.

